

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/662,414

Examiner

Kambiz Abdi

Applicant(s)

BEACH ET AL.

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to February 13, 2006.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-41.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date 4-26-06.
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____.


KAMBIZ ABDI
PRIMARY EXAMINER

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DETAILED ACTION

1. Text of all the office actions previously forwarded to the applicant as well as all the responses to such office actions has been incorporated by reference.

- Claim 42 was canceled.
- Claims 1, 2, 5, 12, 13, 15, 18, 20, 21, 24, 26, 31, 32, 37, and 40 are amended.
- Claims 1-41 are allowed.

Examiner's Amendment

2. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

3. Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in an interview with attorney Steve Arnett conducted on April 20, 2006.

4. The examiner under agreement by the attorney representing the applicant has amended claims 1, 2, 5, 12, 13, 15, 18, 20, 21, 24, 26, 31, 32, 37, and 40.

5. The claims in the application has been amended as follow:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for verifying a voucher or token, comprising:
receiving a plurality of randomly oriented coins of multiple denominations;
discriminating the coins to determine a value;
outputting a voucher or token for an amount related to the value of the coins;
recording a code associated with the voucher or token in a voucher or token database;
scanning the voucher or token to retrieve the code at a cashier's station;
querying a the voucher or token database for information associated with the code; and
determining whether the voucher or token is valid, using the information associated with
the code, wherein the cashier's station uses a first communication link coupled to
query a back room computer for information unrelated to the code, but wherein
the querying stepcashier's station uses a second communication link different

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from the first communication link to query the voucher or token database for the information associated with the code.

2. (Currently Amended) A method for verifying a voucher or token, as claimed in Claim 1, further including the step of:

providing a coin counting mechanism machine, wherein the steps of receiving, discriminating, and outputting occur at the coin counting machine which is configured to receive, all at once, a plurality of randomly oriented coins of multiple denominations and other objects, discriminate the coins and output the voucher or token for an amount related to the value of the coins.

3. (Original) A method for verifying a voucher or token, as claimed in Claim 1, wherein:

the scanning step is performed with a recognition subsystem.

4. (Original) A method for verifying a voucher or token, as claimed in Claim 1, wherein:

the recording step includes recording a value associated with the code.

5. (Currently Amended) A method for verifying a voucher or token, comprising:

receiving a plurality of randomly oriented coins of multiple denominations;

discriminating the coins to determine a value;

outputting a voucher or token for an amount related to the value of the coins;

recording a code associated with the voucher or token;

scanning the voucher or token to retrieve the code at a cashier's station;

querying a kiosk which includes at least a portion of a voucher or token database for information associated with the code, wherein the querying step includes querying a kiosk which includes at least a portion of the voucher or token database; and

determining whether the voucher or token is valid, using the information associated with the code, wherein the cashier's station uses a first communication link coupled to query a back room computer for information unrelated to the code, but wherein the querying step cashier's station uses a second communication link different from the first communication link to query the kiosk for the information associated with the code.

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6. (Original) A method for verifying a voucher or token, as claimed in Claim 5, wherein:

the recording step is performed in a remote location from the kiosk.

7. (Original) A method for verifying a voucher or token, as claimed in Claim 1, wherein:

the querying step includes querying a control center which includes at least a portion of the voucher or token database.

8. (Original) A method for verifying a voucher or token, as claimed in Claim 1, wherein:

the querying step is performed by a recognition subsystem.

9. (Original) A method for verifying a voucher or token, as claimed in Claim 1, wherein:

the voucher or token includes at least one of a magnetic strip, a bar code or a smartcard.

10. (Original) A method for verifying a voucher or token, as claimed in Claim 1, wherein:

the voucher or token is at least one of a phone card, a gift certificate, a mass transit pass, a travel ticket, a financial instrument and an event ticket.

11. (Original) A method for verifying a voucher or token, as claimed in Claim 1, further including the step of:

printing the voucher or token.

12. (Currently Amended) A method for verifying a voucher or token, as claimed in Claim 1, ~~further including wherein the discriminating step of:~~

~~counting includes discriminating coins with a coin counting mechanism~~ in a kiosk, wherein at least a part of the database is located in the kiosk.

13. (Currently Amended) A system which verifies a voucher or token, comprising:

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a coin counting machine configured to receive a plurality of randomly oriented coins, discriminate the coins to determine a value, and output a voucher or token for an amount related to the value of the coins;
a cashier's station which uses a first communication link with a back room computer to obtain information unrelated to the voucher or token;
a voucher or token database which stores ~~at least one of a code and a value~~ associated with the voucher or token;
a recognition subsystem which reads the code from the voucher or token at the cashier's station; and
first and second transceivers which form a second communication link, different from the first communication link, wherein the second communication link couples together the voucher or token database and the recognition subsystem, and wherein the cashier's station uses the second communication link to query the voucher or token database for information associated with the code.

14. (Original) A system which verifies a voucher or token, as claimed in Claim 13, wherein:
the code associated with a voucher or token is unique.

15. (Currently Amended) A system which verifies a voucher or token, as claimed in Claim 13, wherein:
the voucher or token database stores ~~a value associated with~~ with the amount of the voucher or token.

16. (Original) A system which verifies a voucher or token, as claimed in Claim 13, wherein:
the transceivers communicate with at least one of the following techniques: wireless, carrier current, data over telephone voice systems and direct-wired communication.

17. (Original) A system which verifies a voucher or token, as claimed in Claim 13, further comprising:
a modem coupled to the recognition subsystem for electronic verification of the voucher or token.

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18. (Currently Amended) A system which verifies a voucher or token, the system comprising:

- a cashier's station which uses a first communication link with a back room computer;
 - a voucher or token database which stores at least one of a code and a value associated with the voucher or token;
 - a kiosk which includes a coin counting mechanism, wherein at least a part of the voucher or token database is located in the kiosk;
 - a recognition subsystem which reads the code from the voucher or token at the cashier's station; and
- first and second transceivers which form a second communication link, different from the first communication link, wherein the second communication link couples together the voucher or token database and the recognition subsystem, and wherein the cashier's station uses the second communication link to query the voucher or token database for information associated with the code.

19. (Original) A system which verifies a voucher or token, as claimed in Claim 13, wherein:

the system is not coupled to a point of sale system.

20. (Currently Amended) A system which verifies a voucher or token, comprising:
means for receiving a plurality of randomly oriented coins of multiple denominations;
means for discriminating the coins to determine a value;
means for outputting a voucher or token for an amount related to the value of the coins;
means for recording a code associated with the voucher or token in a voucher or token database;
means for scanning the voucher or token to retrieve the code at a cashier's station;
means for querying ~~a~~the voucher or token database for information associated with the code; and
means for determining whether the voucher or token is valid, using the information associated with the code, wherein the cashier's station uses a first communication link ~~coupled to query~~ a back room computer for information unrelated to the code, but wherein ~~the querying means~~ the cashier's station uses a second communication link different from the first communication link to query the voucher or token database for the information associated with the code.

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21. (Currently Amended) A system which verifies a voucher or token, as claimed in Claim 20, ~~further comprising: wherein the means for receiving include~~

~~a coin counting machinemechanism which is configured to receive, all at once, a plurality of randomly oriented coins of multiple denominations and other objects, discriminate the coins and output the voucher or token for an amount related to the value of the coins.~~

22. (Original) A system which verifies a voucher or token, as claimed in Claim 20, wherein:

the scanning means includes a recognition subsystem.

23. (Original) A system which verifies a voucher or token, as claimed in Claim 20, wherein:

the recording means includes a second means for recording a value associated with the code.

24. (Currently Amended) A system which verifies a voucher or token, as claimed in Claim 20, wherein:

the querying means includes ~~a second~~ means for querying a kiosk which includes at least a portion of the voucher or token database.

25. (Original) A system which verifies a voucher or token, as claimed in Claim 24, wherein:

the recording means is located in a remote location from the kiosk.

26. (Currently Amended) A system which verifies a voucher or token, as claimed in Claim 20, wherein:

the querying means includes ~~a second~~ means for querying a control center which includes at least a portion of the voucher or token database.

27. (Original) A system which verifies a voucher or token, as claimed in Claim 20, wherein:

the querying means includes a recognition subsystem.

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28. (Original) A system which verifies a voucher or token, as claimed in Claim 20, wherein:

the voucher or token includes at least one of a magnetic strip and a bar code.

29. (Original) A system which verifies a voucher or token, as claimed in Claim 20, wherein:

the voucher or token is at least one of a phone card, a gift certificate, a mass transit pass, a travel ticket, a financial instrument and an event ticket.

30. (Original) A system which verifies a voucher or token, as claimed in Claim 20, further comprising:

means for printing the voucher or token.

31. (Currently Amended) A system which verifies a voucher or token, as claimed in Claim 20, ~~further comprising:~~ wherein the

means for counting-discriminating the coins with-include a coin counting mechanism in a kiosk, wherein at least a part of the database is located in the kiosk.

32. (Currently Amended) A method for verifying the validity of vouchers or tokens, comprising:

receiving a plurality of randomly oriented coins of multiple denominations;

discriminating the coins to determine a value;

outputting a voucher or token for an amount related to the value of the coins;

recording a code ~~and a value~~ associated with the amount of the voucher or token;

reading the voucher or token to retrieve the code at a cashier's station;

determining the ~~value~~ amount associated with the code; and

redeeming the ~~value~~ amount associated with the code, wherein the cashier's station uses a first communication link coupled to a back room computer to obtain information unrelated to the code, but wherein the determining-step ~~cashier's station~~ uses a second communication link different from the first communication link to determine the amount associated with the code.

33. (Original) A method for verifying the validity of vouchers or tokens, as claimed in Claim 32, wherein:

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the code contains at least a modem number of an issuing kiosk.

34. (Original) A method for verifying the validity of vouchers or tokens, as claimed in Claim 32, wherein:

the code is related to at least one of a printed voucher or token or a preexisting card.

35. (Original) A method for verifying the validity of vouchers or tokens, as claimed in Claim 32, further comprising the step of:

recording a residual value associated with the code after the redeeming step.

36. (Original) A method for verifying the validity of vouchers or tokens, as claimed in Claim 32, wherein:

the reading step is performed with at least one of a card reader, a smartcard reader and a bar code scanner.

37. (Currently Amended) A method for verifying the validity of vouchers or tokens, comprising:

receiving a plurality of randomly oriented coins of multiple denominations;

discriminating the coins to determine a value;

outputting a voucher or token for an amount related to the value of the coins;

recording a value associated with the amount of the voucher or token;

reading the voucher or token to retrieve the value amount at a cashier's station;

verifying the value associated with amount of the voucher or token; and

redeeming the value associated with amount of the ~~code~~ voucher or token, wherein the cashier's station uses a first communication link ~~coupled to~~ query a back room computer for information unrelated to the voucher or token, but wherein the verifying step cashier's station uses a second communication link different from the first communication link to verify the amount of the voucher or token.

38. (Previously Presented) A method for verifying the validity of vouchers or tokens, the method comprising:

a step for purchasing merchandise at a cashier's station which uses a first communication link with a back room computer;

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a step for storing, in a database, at least one of a code and a value associated with a voucher or token;

a step for reading the code from the voucher or token using a recognition subsystem; and

a step for verifying the at least one of the code and the value using a second communication link, wherein the second communication link couples together the database and the recognition subsystem.

39. (Original) A method for verifying the validity of vouchers or tokens, as claimed in Claim 38, wherein:

the recognition subsystem is located at the cashier's station.

40. (Currently Amended) A system which verifies a voucher or token, comprising:
a coin counting machine configured to receives a plurality of randomly oriented coins, discriminate the coins to determine a value, and output a voucher or token for an amount related to the value of the coins;

a cashier's station which uses a first communication link with a back room computer to obtain information unrelated to the voucher or token;

a voucher or token database which stores a code ~~and a value~~ associated with the voucher or token, wherein the code ~~associated with a voucher or token~~ is unique;

a recognition subsystem which reads the code from the voucher or token;

~~a modem coupled to the recognition subsystem for electronic verification of the voucher or token;~~ and

first and second transceivers which form a second communication link, different from the first communication link, wherein the second communication link couples together the voucher or token database and the recognition subsystem for electronic verification of the voucher or token based on the code.

41. (Original) A system which verifies a voucher or token, as claimed in Claim 25, further comprising:

a kiosk which includes a coin counting mechanism and wherein at least a part of the voucher or token database is located in the kiosk.

42. (Cancelled) An apparatus and method for verifying the validity of vouchers or tokens as described in the specification and/or illustrated in the drawings.

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Allowable Subject Matter

6. Claims 1-41 are allowed over the prior art of record.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

7. The closest prior art of record is U.S. Patent No. 6,736,725 to James G. Burns et al. discloses a gaming system capable of accepting paper currency, preprinted coupons, or cash out slips (Wining Vouchers). The system includes a printer that prints and dispenses cash out slips (Vouchers) that include a bar code representing a unique identification that provides the amount of "winnings". The cash out slip can be scanned into a separate currency dispenser at cashier's station for receiving currency. And U.S. Patent No. 6,318,536 to Bruce R. Korman et al. disclosing a multi-transaction coin machine, which accepts a number of coins, counts the coins and displays the value to a user for redeeming such value for further purchase of goods and services over a network.

8. In regards to independent claims 1, 5, 13, 18, 20, 32, 37, and 40, the closest prior art of record when taken either individually or in combination with other prior art of record fails to teach or fairly suggest based on the coin counting system for further transactions at a cashier's station separate from the coin counting system, and for verification of validity of the voucher that is presented in the cashier's station, using a first communication link for the store business and a second communication link logically separate from the first communication link for specific use of voucher validation and communication with the coin counting system database. As is shown in exemplary step of independent claim 1:

determining whether the voucher or token is valid, using the information associated with the code, wherein the cashier's station uses a first communication link ~~coupled to~~ query a back room computer for information unrelated to the code, but wherein the ~~querying-step~~ cashier's station uses a second communication link different from the first communication link to query the voucher or token database for the information associated with the code.

9. Claims 2-4 are dependent upon claim 1, claims 6-12 are dependent upon claim 5, claims 14-17 are dependent upon claim 13, claim 19 is dependent upon claim 18, claims 21-31 are

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dependent upon claim 20, claims 33-36 are dependent upon claim 32, claims 38-39 are dependent upon claim 37, and claim 41 is dependent upon claim 40, thus have all the limitations of independent claim 1 and are allowable for the same reason.

Conclusion

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to **Kambiz Abdi** whose telephone number is **(571) 272-6702**. The Examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 9:30am-5:00pm. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's supervisor, **James Trammell** can be reached at **(571) 272-6712**.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://portal.uspto.gov/external/portal/pair>

Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). Any response to this action should be mailed to:

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(571) 273-8300 [Official communications; including After Final communications labeled "Box AF"]

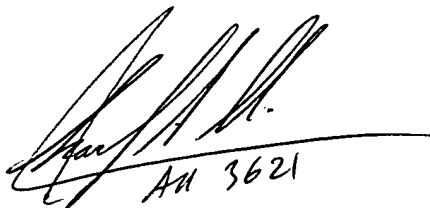
(571) 273-6702 [Informal/Draft communications, labeled "PROPOSED" or "DRAFT"]

Hand delivered responses should be brought to the Examiner in the

Knox Building, 50 Dulany St. Alexandria, VA.

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Primary Examiner

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AN 3621

April 26, 2006